



The Noble Creed
Al-‘Aqīda al-Ḥasana

Also known as
The Beliefs of Islām
‘Aqā’id al-Islām

Imām Shaykh Shāh Waliyyullāh al-Dihlawī¹

(Allāh have mercy on him)

Translated by
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¹ Shāh Waliyyullāh al-Dihlawī: He is Shāh Waliyyullāh Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Dihlawī (1114 AH / 1703 CE – 1176 AH / 1762 CE).

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In the name of Allāh, the Divinely-Compassionate, the Ever-Merciful.

All praise is due to Allāh, the Sustainer of [all] the worlds, and may blessings be upon the our master Muhammad - the Seal of [all] the Prophets, [upon] his progeny and his Companions – all of them.

As for what follows:

So says this indigent, in need of the mercy of Allāh ﷻ - the Most generous, Aḥmad – known as Waliyyullāh, son of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm – may Allāh ﷻ treat them both with beneficence: I render a witness; Allāh ﷻ; and whoever among the angels, the jinn and the humans are present, that I wholeheartedly believe:

Monotheism

That the world has a Maker; [Who is] Pre-eternal; has always existed and will always exist; Whose existence is incumbent; Whose nonexistence is impossible. He ﷻ is the Great; the Supreme; characterised with all the attributes of merit and free from all the bearings of shortcoming and inferiority. He ﷻ is the Creator of all the creation; Knower of all [the types of] what is to know; Capable of [performing] all possibilities; Intender of all [the aspects of] existence; Alive; Beholder; there is no semblance to Him, none opposite to Him, none equal to Him, and none like Him ﷻ. He ﷻ has no associate in the incumbency of existence (*wājib al-wujūd*); nor in the right of being worshipped, and nor in creating and determining [the affairs of the creation]. Thus, there is none worthy of [being the object of] worship – i.e. extreme reverence – but He ﷻ; no one cures the sick, nor provides subsistence, and nor removes harm but He ﷻ; in terms of when He ﷻ says to a thing ‘Be!’ and it is, and nor in terms of the apparent customary reason, like it is said ‘the physician cured the sick,’ and ‘the commander fed the army,’ for this is something else even though the wording is similar. He ﷻ has no assistant; He ﷻ does not transmigrate into another; Nothing commutative exists with His Being, and there is no commutation in His Being and nor in His ﷻ attributes, but commutation in connection to the attributes is in what pertains to them [= divine attributes] – such that actions become manifest. Its reality is that such connection is not commutative either, but rather, that which is commutative is what pertains [to it], and hence the commands of the connection appear in disparity. He ﷻ is free from commutation and multiplicity in all perspectives.

He ﷻ is neither matter, nor show, nor corporeity form, nor in any confines and or direction – He ﷻ is not indicated to with *here* or *there*. It is incorrect to attribute Him ﷻ with movement, transfer, mutation - in His Being and in His attributes - and also futility and lying. He ﷻ is above the Throne (*‘Arsh*), as He ﷻ has described Himself, but not in the meaning of being confined and nor of direction. In fact, no one knows this loftiness and establishing authority of His ﷻ but He ﷻ, and those who are perfectly firm in knowledge² - of those whom Allāh ﷻ has bestowed with knowledge from His Own Self.

Beholding the Beatific Vision

He ﷻ can be seen by the Believers on the Day of Judgement in two modes: [i.] He ﷻ reveals [Himself] to them in a manner that is more profound than what is mentally asserted and so it is as though the beholding is with the eyesight except that He ﷻ is free from being parallel [to] or in the front [of anyone], [and free from] direction, colour or form. This is what the Mu‘tazila, etc. claimed, and it is true, but their mistake in the interpretation of ‘beholding’ in

² Holy Qur’ān, Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān (3), Verse 7.

this meaning is their restricting it to beholding with this [particular] meaning. [ii.] The second of the two [modes] is that He ﷻ appears to them in the form of a brilliant light – as has been mentioned in the Sunnah - and they shall behold Him ﷻ with their eyesight as an image, colour, direction, like it occurs in a dream, like the Holy Prophet ﷺ has reported, such that he ﷺ said, ‘I saw my Lord in the most beautiful form.’³ Thus, there they shall see as they see in a dream in this world.

Thus, these two modes; we understand them and we believe in them, but if Allāh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ intend ‘beholding’ [to mean] something other than these two [meanings], then [that is] the truth. We believe in the intended [meaning] of Allāh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ even though we do not know it absolutely.

The Power of Allāh

Whatever Allāh ﷻ wills, it occurs, and whatever He ﷻ does not will, does not occur. Thus, disbelief and sins are of His creation and His will, but not of His pleasure. [He ﷻ is] Ghanī (free of want) without need of anything in His Being or His attributes; there is no authority above Him ﷻ; nothing enjoins on Him ﷻ by the obliging of another - yes, He ﷻ promises a thing and He ﷻ fulfils that pledge, as has been mentioned [in ḥadīths] and so it is a assurance from Allāh ﷻ. All His doings imply wisdom and comprehensive welfare even if we [know them or] do not know them. Particular specific gentleness, and specific reform, is not incumbent on Him ﷻ. Nothing foul emanates from Him ﷻ. Injustice and oppression are not ascribed to what He ﷻ does or ordains. He ﷻ reflects wisdom in whatever He ﷻ creates or commands, and not so that He ﷻ may acquire completeness in His Being or His attributes, and nor that He ﷻ has any need of it or aim [in it], for such need is a weakness and ignominy.

There is no authority besides Him ﷻ, and so the intellect has no right in asserting the beauty and ugliness of things, and [nor in] deeds being a cause of reward and punishment, for verily, the beauty and ugliness of things is only by the decree of Allāh ﷻ, by His command and by His giving responsibility to the people. Among them is the perspective of welfare and congruity with reward and punishment that the intellect grasps, and among them is that which it does not grasp except with the information given by the Messengers of Allāh ﷻ. Each of the attributes of Allāh ﷻ is itself one, infinite in accordance to the attachment of the [relevant] meaning.

Angels and Devils

Allāh ﷻ has some angels [who are held]; [i.] in loftiness and in proximity, and [ii.] angels who are charged with recording deeds, [iii.] protecting the slave from perils, [iv.] inviting to the good and instilling in him inclination to goodness. Each one of them has a known station. They do not disobey Allāh ﷻ in what He ﷻ enjoins them – they do what they are instructed. Among the creation are the devils also – they instil in Man the inclination to [commit] evil.

The Qur’ān

The Qur’ān is a speech that Allāh ﷻ has inspired to our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, for it is not appropriate that Allāh ﷻ should speak to a human but through inspiration, from behind a veil, or send to him a messenger [i.e. angel] who inspires with His authority whatever He ﷻ wills. This is the reality of [divine] inspiration.

³ Al-Tirmidhī, al-Dārimī, etc. Other books of ḥadīth report similarly with a difference in word composition.

The Names of Allāh ﷻ

It is not permitted to invent names or attributes for Allāh ﷻ - their applicability is dependent on the Sharī'a.

The Hereafter and the Divine Assembly

The physical hereafter is a reality. The physical bodies will be assembled and the souls will be returned to them; the bodies will be those that were, legally and customarily, though they may be a little taller or a little shorter, as is mentioned [in ḥadīths] that the molars of the disbeliever shall be like [Mount] Uhud.⁴ The bodies might be even finer than those, as is mentioned [in ḥadīths] regarding the description of the inhabitants of the Garden,⁵ and that is because it is the child who becomes youthful and who becomes old, even if his bodily parts had changed a thousand-fold.

The punishment, the accountability, the Bridge and the Scales are a reality.

The Garden and the Fire

The Garden [of Paradise] and the Fire [of Hell] are a reality. Both of them are creations [even] today. No text has explicitly designated their locations; in fact, they are as Allāh ﷻ wills them to be, since we have no capacity [in knowledge] to contain the [entire] creation or the cosmoses of Allāh ﷻ.

The Muslim who commits grave sins shall not remain forever in the Fire [of Hell], for it is what Allāh ﷻ has said: 'If you avoid the major (sins) of which you are forbidden, We shall do away your minor sins,'⁶ this means the prayer and the expiations, and thus forgiveness of grave sins is admissible.

Conversely, it is due to the actions of Allāh ﷻ being of two kinds in this World and in the Hereafter; [i.] in agreement to the manner of Allāh ﷻ, and [ii]. being by way of the preternatural.

Forgiveness of the grave sins of one who dies without repenting is admissible from the aspect of preternatural phenomena – this is the most acceptable conformity between the texts that initially seem contradictory.

The Intercession

The Intercession is a reality – for whom al-Raḥmān (Divinely-Compassionate) authorises it. The Intercession of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ for the gravely sinful from his Community (Umma) is a reality, for he ﷺ is an Intercessor.

Wherever the intercession has been mentioned in denial, what is intended by it is the intercession that occasions out of the authorisation and disapproval of Allāh ﷻ.

The punishment in the grave for the morally corrupt, and pampering of the Believers, is a reality. The questioning by al-Munkar and al-Nakīr [in the grave] is a reality.

Messengership

The sending of Messengers to the creation is a reality.

⁴ Muslim, etc.

⁵ Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, etc.

⁶ Holy Qur'an, Sura al-Nisā' (4), Verse 31.

Allāh ﷻ charging His slaves with prescriptions and proscriptions through the tongues of the Messengers is a reality.

They [= the Messengers] are distinct due to certain matters that are not collectively found in others, and that indicate their being Prophets, which include; preternatural phenomena [occurring] for them, the soundness of their natural disposition, the perfection of their morals, etc.

The Prophets are protected from disbelief, intentional grave sins and being insistent on them – Allāh ﷻ has rendered them innocent of sins in three modes: [i.] the first of which is that He ﷻ creates them [= the Prophets and Messengers] in the soundness of natural disposition and perfectly balanced morality, due to which they do not incline towards acts of disobedience – in fact, they are repulsed by sins, [ii.] the second of which is that He ﷻ inspires them [by Divine Revelation] that verily the acts of disobedience are culpable and the acts of obedience are rewarded, and that also deters [them] from sins, [iii.] and the third is that Allāh ﷻ interposes fine unseen seizures between them and the acts of disobedience, such as the appearance of the image of Ya‘qūb ﷺ biting his finger in the story of Yūsuf ﷺ.

Muḥammad ﷺ

Muḥammad ﷺ is the Seal of the Prophets – there is no prophet after him ﷺ. His invitation is universal to the entirety of humankind and jinn-kind. He ﷺ is superior to all the Prophets on account of this particularity and also on account of other particularities like this one.

The Friends of Allāh ﷻ

And the miracles of the Friends (*Awliyā’* - Saints) [of Allāh ﷻ] are a reality – and they are the Believers who enjoy acquaintance with Allāh ﷻ and His attributes, and excel in their faith. Allāh ﷻ privileges whom He wills with miracles, and He ﷻ specifies His mercy to whom He ﷻ intends.

The Ten Who Were Promised Paradise

We bear witness of the Garden [of Paradise] and Goodness for the Ten Who Were Promised Paradise (*‘Ashara Mubashshara*), and also for Fāṭima, Ḥudhayfa, ‘Ā’isha, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn ﷺ - all of them. We follow them, and we acknowledge the greatness of their statuses in Islām, and likewise, the [veterans of the Battle] of Badr, and the participants at the Riqdān Pledge (Pledge of Pleasure).

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ is the rightful leader after the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and thereafter ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān and then ‘Alī ﷺ. Then the Caliphate ended, and after it came a mordacious monarchy.

Abū Bakr ﷺ is the most excellent of mankind after the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ [and after the Prophets], and then ‘Umar ﷺ. We do not imply superiority in all perspectives, such that would encompass genealogy, courage, strength, knowledge, and their likes, but rather, it is in the terms of [providing] the [relatively] greater benefit to Islām. Thus, the [supreme] commander (*‘amīr*) is the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and his two ministers are Abū Bakr ﷺ and ‘Umar ﷺ by virtue of their extensive determination in promoting the Truth.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has two standings; [i.] one standing where he ﷺ receives from Allāh ﷻ, and [ii.] one standing where he ﷺ gives to the creation. Both of them [= Abū Bakr ﷺ and

‘Umar ؓ had [an abundance] in giving to the creation in order to reconcile the people, to gather them [on Islām], and a decisive influence in strategizing in warfare.

We restrain our tongues from mentioning the Companions ؓ except in goodness, for they are our leaders and our guides in *dīn*. Insolence towards them is unlawful it is obligatory to revere them.

Not Declaring the People of our Qibla to be Disbelievers

We do not declare disbeliever any one of those who face our Qibla, save for that [belief] wherein lies; [i.] denial of the Qādir (All-Powerful) – the Mukhtār (Sovereign) [, i.e. Allāh ﷻ], [ii.] worshipping than other than Allāh ﷻ, [iii.] disbelief in the Hereafter, [iv.] [disbelief in] a Prophet, and [v.] [denial of any one of] all the compulsive necessities of the *dīn*.

Enjoining to do good and prohibiting the forbidden is incumbent, provided it does not lead to mischief and its approval is [strongly] presumed.

Conclusion

Thus, this is my creed. I have [full] faith in Allāh ﷻ about it, in [both] the outward and the inward.

All praise is due to Allāh ﷻ, in the commencement and the conclusion, in the external and the internal.

